

# **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM**

## **2006 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Missouri Department of Economic Development**



## **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR 2006**

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The Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) is authorized to allocate up to \$6 million in tax credits per year for youth projects. Through the 2006 application process, YOP approved a total of 43 projects with a total allocation of \$5,991,713 in tax credits. A 2006 project list is enclosed.

YOP primarily partners with non-profits that work in their communities to develop and implement opportunities for at-risk youth. They teach youth to overcome their current circumstances and realize their potential as productive citizens. The non-profits partner with the Youth Opportunities Program to leverage private dollars to fund projects that meet this goal. Youth stay in school, obtain high school diplomas, earn GEDs, participate in internships and employment experiences to learn job skills, learn conflict resolution techniques and abstain from drugs and alcohol. This program is an incentive for non-profits to provide this programming to youth that would otherwise not have these opportunities.

In 1998, the Youth Opportunities Program adopted the following seven program outcomes as a means to measure and verify the impact the program is having throughout the state.

- 1. Increase the number of at-risk youth with a high school diploma.**
- 2. Increase the number of at-risk youth that receive a GED.**
- 3. Increase the number of at-risk youth that remain in school and earn course credit(s) toward a diploma.**
- 4. Reduce the number of at-risk youth committing crimes and violent acts.**
- 5. Decrease the number of at-risk female teens that become pregnant.**
- 6. Increase the number of youth that have completed alcohol and drug awareness programs and abstain from alcohol and drug use.**
- 7. Increase the number of at-risk youth that have completed an employment skills education and development program.**

To date, projects awarded credits in 2004-2006 have reported the following results under each of the program outcomes. These numbers will increase as we continue to tabulate final reports. The numbers are the totals to date for the projects authorized credits in each year. The amount of redeemed tax credits to date will reflect the true cost to the State for the outcomes produced. Projects have up to 3 years to complete a project and taxpayers have the tax year in which they contributed plus 5 succeeding tax years to redeem their tax credits. The outcome totals may vary from year to year depending on the projects that are funded under the program. Some of the numbers may include duplicated youth if the youth participate in the program more than one year or if they achieve more than one outcome.

In 2006 alone, there was \$5,991,713 tax credits authorized for the Youth Opportunities Program by the Department of Economic Development.

	2004	2005	2006
<b>Credits Authorized To Date*</b>	\$5,697,069	\$5,923,009	\$5,991,713
<b>Credits Issued To Date*</b>	\$4,042,404	\$4,810,019	\$1,129,374
<b>Credits Redeemed To Date*</b>	\$2,903,618	\$1,997,181	\$23,197
<b>Number of Jobs Retained and New</b>	113	196	495
<b>Number Earning High School Diploma</b>	146	171	85
<b>Number Earning GED</b>	19	62	20
<b>Number Earning School Credits</b>	1,282	6,548	569
<b>Number Not Committing Crimes/Violent Acts</b>	741	2,270	15
<b>Number of Teens Not Becoming Pregnant</b>	94	234	
<b>Number Abstaining from Drug/Alcohol Abuse</b>	1,509	11,945	
<b>Number Learning Employment Skills</b>	560	173	180
<b>Number Achieving Other Outcomes</b>	1,951	7,689	911

*\*Credits Authorized To Date=Total Amount Authorized each calendar year minus any credits we have recaptured to date.*

*\*Credits Issued To Date=Total Credits issued for the projects that were authorized in that calendar year.*

*\*Credits Redeemed To Date=Total Credits that have been redeemed by taxpayers for the projects that were authorized in that calendar year.*

Calendar year 2006 also resulted in three facilities being renovated, as well as 165 youth-serving new jobs. In addition, current projects raised almost \$9 million in contributions. Therefore, YOP projects leveraged almost \$4.5 million in private dollars after subtracting the credits that were issued.

As shown by the numbers above, many projects are successfully helping youth become productive adults using the tax credits as a tool to raise dollars to run their organization.

For example, Ozanam (Pathways) in Kansas City, Missouri provides youth with a comprehensive menu of services that concentrates on education, vocation, self-sufficiency programs, transitional living services that will assist at-risk youth in the development of essential life skills that will promote transition into adulthood.

The YOP tax credits have been extremely helpful in Ozanam's fundraising efforts to help support the Pathways Transitional Living program. Through their website, newsletters, appeal letters and direct relationships with donors they have been able to talk about the advantages for a

corporate or individual donor to give to Ozanam and explain the tax advantages to them. The YOP tax credits give Ozanam an opportunity 1) bring more awareness to their programs, 2) help the donor to understand that not only can they support a worthy cause but also benefit from the tax credits received and 3) most importantly, our young adults are the real winners as they are able to generate more dollars to help them get started in leading a successful life.

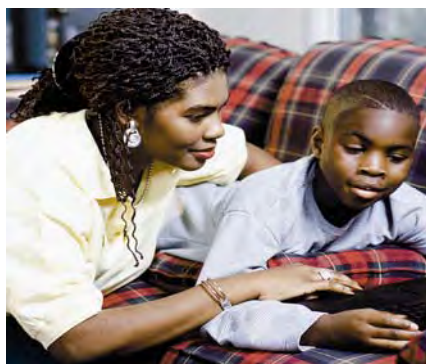


The Pathways program has been recognized as a transitional living program that provides quality services to the community and one that is able to help young adults during their transition from teenager to young adult. Identified outcomes include:  
50 of 60 at-risk youth will remain in school or attend GED programming.

48 of 60 at risk youth will show a 15% improvement on their life skills assessment scores leading to improvement in their independent living skills knowledge.

50 of 60 youth will complete employment skills training and secure employment.

Another organization that has been successful in utilizing the Youth Opportunities Program tax credits is MBCH Children and Family Ministries. This organization is headquartered in Bridgeton and is licensed to provide out-of-home care for 112 children statewide through a variety of programs that provide community-based services (therapeutic family foster care, pregnancy counseling and supportive services, and case management). Children and youth come into the care of suffering the mental abuse, problems and



The goal of the and Family each child to from an external becoming self-

MBCH Children and Family Ministries effects of physical abuse, sexual abuse, abandonment, neglect, behavioral severe family dysfunction.

services provided by MBCH Children Ministries is to create the opportunity for achieve his or her potential, while moving to an internal locus of control, thus sufficient, functional members of society.

Because of the amount of benevolent care the agency provides to at-risk children and youth, funding generated by such programs as the Youth Opportunities Program are vital to increase donor awareness and financial assistance in order to enable the agency to continue to provide the necessary care for these children. Because of the enhanced resources generated through the incentive of the tax credits, children served through the programs at MBCH Children and Family Ministries continue to receive care from well-trained, dedicated workers who are committed to making a positive, lasting difference in the life of each child.